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ABSTRACT

The integration of print and non-print resources in libraries or media centers is a complex issue that involves three considerations: intershelving, records organization, and integration of a media center's functional areas. Although resource integration is not appropriate in every setting, it is highly recommended for community college and public libraries, which should utilize total integration of media center resources to the maximum extent possible. Intershelving, an approach that by definition represents a maximum level of integration in shelving and storage, is recommended because it increases the likelihood that a user will find either a known work or a relevant work through browsing. An integrated approach to records organization is suggested since users are often unlikely to be aware of, or disposed to search in, separate catalogs. Finally, the integration of a media center's functional areas is recommended due to the economies of scale benefits that result from treating all media formats in like manner; moreover, functional integration avoids dysfunctional interdepartmental conflict. Maximum overall integration involving these three aspects simultaneously maximizes the accessibility of resources and user satisfaction. Sixteen references are cited. (KM)

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MEDIA INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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INTRODUCTION

There are three main aspects to the integration of print and non-print resources in a library or media center. These consist of: the intershelving of materials, an integrated approach to records organization, and the integration of the processing of print and non-print materials in relevant functional areas. This paper advocates integration within all three aspects and to the fullest extent possible to optimize user satisfaction. Unfortunately, as noted by Newiss, little formal research has been conducted to actually determine the level of user satisfaction associated with integration.[1] Thus, the analysis is based on so-called "lessons of experience" reported in the literature rather than on empirical work.

Due to the nature of the issues involved, integration can not be treated as if only applicable to simple models of dichotomous choice. Instead, a "degrees of integration" perspective is applicable to most of the constituent issues.[2] Furthermore, the resultant recommendation for integration applies only to community college and public libraries where arrival collections are not involved. These two types of libraries that represent extremes on the well-known "materials continuum." Public libraries are associated with the form end of the continuum and community college libraries are located at or near the content or subject oriented end point.

INTERSHELVING ASPECT OF INTEGRATION

As with other aspects of integration, the physical integra-

tion of materials can be considered according to alternatives which represent varying degrees of integration. Essentially, three potential degrees of integration applicable to materials storage may be advanced. These potential alternatives have been described by Weihs et al as: total intershelving, partial intershelving, and segregated shelving.[3]

Total intershelving is recommended as the shelving medium of choice. The primary reason for total intershelving is the fact that collocation of print and non-print materials tends to encourage the use of the full range of media for a given subject.[4] Furthermore, intershelving also facilitates user retrieval of all materials available on a given subject in all formats.[5] Thus, the integrated display of materials produces its benefits whether a user goes to the stacks in search of a known item or is simply engaged in browsing.

At a higher level of abstraction, this approach establishes the formal equivalence of book and non-book materials in the minds of users.[6] This is a particularly important consideration for the secondary school segment due to the fact that its constituents are growing up during the "media generation." McLuen's "the medium is the message" can not be underestimated and applies to society both inside and outside the library.[7]

Critics of intershelving usually propose partial intershelving or segregated shelving as alternatives. Their criticism of integrated shelving is usually based on two factors. Namely, they usually cite the fact that print and non-print packaging are incompatable and that intershelving may result in less

than optimal storage efficiency.[8] However, as noted by Tiffany both arguements become moot in light of recent developments by vendors.[9] Rapid advances in standardized book equivalent size storage boxes for video tapes, audio cassettes and even short films overcome this criticism. Essentially, these advances allow not only compatable storage but efficient storage as well.[9] Furthermore, developments in transparent storage container design for audiovisual materials is another important change area.[10] These containers advance browsing efficiency by immediately informing the browser of the type of media that resides on the shelf.

Still other criticisms of total integrated shelving have been advanced. Some have said that the requisite need to integrate playback equipment with materials storage places an unnecessary burden on librarians.[11] However, the experience by Hart reveals that integration can actually result in innovative response opportunities for media center personnel regarding the efficient locating of equipment.[12] Overall, once integration of materials and equipment is fully operationalized, experience in the field reveals that they all "live together" harmoniously in the media center. And still another criticism of intershelving has been disproved. Hart has also found that initial concerns that an increase in vandalism might result were revealed as unfounded by several recent adoptees of intershelving.[13]

ORGANIZATION OF RECORDS ASPECT OF INTEGRATION

As with the issue of intershelving, the integration of records organization is multifaceted and subject to sub-analysis within

a degrees of integration framework. It is also interesting to note that this is probably the least controversial aspect of the integration controversy.

Records integration has two main aspects, the issue of an interfiled catalog structure, and the issue of applying a single subject analysis system to all media formats. When considered as the result or output of relevant process that went into its origination, the card catalog itself synthesizes both subject analysis and filing format aspects. Thus, the interrelated nature of these aspects is not condusive to completely seperate discussion and are presented as a matter of unified concern in the analysis.

The degrees of integration approach described above can also be applied to the physical catalog's construction. Essentially, the catalog can take on three possible forms, a single classified catalog sequence, seperate catalogs by format linked together by a single subject index, and completely seperated classified catalogs by format with no formal linkage.[14]

A single interfiled catalog and subject analysis system are both recommended to operationalize the advantages of materials records integration. Clearly, a single classified catalog referenced through one subject index that indicates format provides superior access to the <u>full</u> range of materials on a subject.[15] Critics of the fully integrated catalog claim that seperate catalogs linked through a single index perform equally well as the integrated catalog. However, the inherent structure of a fully integrated catalog results in a single

subject index being an integral and inseperable part of the scheme. This design is unquestionably superior as a standardized means of subject-format collocation.[16]

The catalog itself should represent a single interfiled sequence. As noted by Croghan, users are often unwilling to use, or ignorant of the existance of, several catalogs that might be located in different places to find the object of their search.[17] The problem is compounded when each catalog evolves into using a unique set of rules as is often the case.

Closely associated with the issues above are subject cataloging and descriptive cataloging treatment of media materials per se. In concert with the recommendations of Weihs et al, it is recommended that the Abridged Dewey Decimal Classification and Relative Index be applied consistently to both print and non-print materials.[18] In this regard, it should also be noted that standardized call numbers should be assigned to both types of materials.[19] Specifically, the use of extensive media format symbols in call numbers should be avoided since they tend to confuse the patron.[20] Instead, the utility of the socalled" omnimedia catalog" is enhanced by making media format representation recognizable without affecting call notation. Recommended methods for media format indication include the use of colored catalog cards or readily legible media stampings on the cards themselves.[21]

As for descriptive cataloging, the multimedia orientation of the second edition of the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACR2) makes it an essential ingredient in completing the

integration of the cataloging function.[22] Incidentally, the recent inclusion of non-print media in cataloging databases such as OCLC overcomes many of the arguements formerly advanced against applying standardized cataloging to non-print materials.

INTEGRATION OF FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF A MEDIA CENTER

This aspect of integration concerns the management of the functional areas of a media center such as selections, acquisitions, and circulation. Specifically, the degree to which non-print materials are handled by the same individuals who are responsible for print materials is the matter of relevant concern. As with intershelving and records organization, this is not only multifaceted by definition, but also amenable to consideration within a degrees of integration framework. Some, such as Doak see the matter more dichotomously however.[23] He maintains that the mere existance of a separate audiovisual department in a multimedia center is de facto proof of poor integration within functional areas.

Integration within functional areas of a media center is the recommendation advanced by this report. Essentially, print and non-print materials should be processed together and treated equally in all functional areas. The primary reason for so-called "functional integration" is that the presence of separate audiovisual selections, acquisitions, and circulation personnel causes print-only specialists to "put their own responsibilities in media matters out of their minds."[24] For example, the individual charged with selection who is limited to print material will never even consider non-print material

as a contributing medium in collection development. Importantly, when non-print responsibility is mandated to someone else, it immediately becomes both beyond the relevant person's control and accountability.

Another arguement can be presented against format departmentalization of areas of responsibility already divided by function. Simply stated, the existence of print and non-print departments causes friction over the allocation of funding to respective "personal empires." This in turn results in extended and disfunctional interdepartmental conflict.[25] However, the criticism does not stop there. Once such empires of specialization are created there is also a tendency for audiovisual specialists to become blinded to the existence of print material that might fulfill a particular purpose. Thus, the converse of the previously described "print-only selection isolation syndrome" is likely to occur.

Beyond this, still another criticsm can be made of inadequate functional integration. The format division of a functional area, for example circulation, inherently results in lower operating efficiency for such a unit.[26] This is because the same function must be performed by two seperate entities which divide the overall workload. This means that the economies of scale advantages that accrue to, say, the high volume print segment of cataloging do not pass on to the non-print segment. A similar case can be made regarding classification, technical processing as a whole, reference, retrevial, public relations, and many other areas as well.

CONCLUSION

This report recommends total integration to the maximum extent possible of all media center resources. The integration of resources is a complex issue that involves three considerations, namely the issue of intershelving, records organization, and integration of a media center's functional areas. Intershelving is an approach that by definition represents a maximum level of integration in shelving and storage. It is recommended because it increases the likelihood that a user will find either a known work or a work through browsing. An integrated approch to records organization is suggested since users are often unlikely to be aware of, or disposed to search in, two seperate catalogs. The integration of a media center's functional areas is the recommended approach due to economies of scale that result from treating all media formats in like manner. Functional integration is also proposed since it avoids disfunctional interdepartmental conflict. Maximum overall integration simultaneously maximizes accessibility of resources in the long run and best serves user needs.

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